

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Regional Educational Laboratory Program 2012-2017

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) will base the source selection decision for this procurement on the following evaluation criteria using a 100 point scale for the technical proposal (Tasks 1-7 only).

Technical Merit will be determined on the basis of the following evaluation factors:

Proposal Evaluation Review Criteria

Technical Proposal (100 points total)

Task 1: Ongoing Assessment of Regional Needs and Services (5 points)

1. The offeror provides a compelling justification for the selected 3-5 priority topics based on regional need and potential for education improvement.
2. The offeror has provided a clear and thorough plan for conducting ongoing regional needs assessment in a systematic and transparent manner. The needs assessment plan includes a well-defined strategy for soliciting the views of educators from LEAs and SEAs and others as appropriate.
3. The offeror has described a system for analyzing REL service coverage and has provided a clear explanation of how coverage will be reported to the public.
4. The offeror and key personnel have sufficient experience and expertise to implement the needs assessment task. Such experience includes prior work on design and implementation of systematic data collection and reporting.

Task 2: Identification and Maintenance of Research Alliances (10 points)

1. The offeror has provided a five year plan of expected research alliances that is aligned with the 3-5 priority topics identified in Task 1. The plan includes the expected number, composition, and scope of work of research alliances over the contract period.
2. The research alliances proposed for Year 1 are clearly linked to the priority topics, have realistic, measurable goals, and have well-specified activities. Each state in the region is represented in at least one research alliance during Year 1.
3. The offeror has provided evidence of interest in each of the proposed Year 1 alliances by providing letters of interest from *at least 1 but not more than 5 stakeholders for each research alliance*. The letters indicate that the potential research alliance members understand the research alliance goals and the nature of participation expected.
4. The offeror has demonstrated thoughtfulness, clarity of purpose, and commitment to participant engagement as evidenced in the proposed first meeting agenda and calendar of events for the Year 1 research alliances provided in support of the proposal.
5. The offeror provides a thorough description of practical strategies for engaging LEAs, SEAs, and others as appropriate in research alliances and maintaining member commitment to the research alliance.
6. The offeror and key personnel have sufficient experience and expertise to implement the strategies described in this task. Such experience includes prior work on the following: (a) creating and maintaining successful partnerships with districts, groups of state agencies, or a combination of state

and local agencies; and (b) using innovative and cost-effective techniques to share information among individuals and groups.

Task 3: Analytic Technical Support (20 points)

1. The offeror has provided a thorough plan for analytic technical support that will build capacity of LEAs, SEAs, and others as appropriate to use data, research, and evaluation as a more routine part of their daily practice. The offeror has provided a compelling justification describing how each proposed analytic technical support activity will build this capacity.
2. The offeror and key personnel have demonstrated sufficient experience and expertise to implement the strategies described in this task. Such experience and expertise includes prior work on the following: (a) using state and local education agency longitudinal data systems; (b) helping states and districts conduct their own research and evaluation projects; (c) providing training on using data to improve education strategies and outcomes; (d) preparation of user-friendly analytic “how-to” documents, and (e) content-area expertise appropriate to the focus of the analytic technical support agenda, with specific detail provided for the work to be conducted in Year 1.
3. The offeror has demonstrated its ability to provide quality technical assistance, including clear, succinct, accessible, and useful guidance to LEAs and SEAs, as evidenced by an exemplar technical assistance document provided in the appendix of the proposal. **The offeror shall include the following statement on the cover sheet of the exemplar: *This document does not reflect any comments from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) or its designees under the REL program.***
4. The offeror has demonstrated its ability to design an effective technical assistance event to build research capacity, as evidenced by an exemplar detailed agenda for this type of event provided in the appendix of the proposal. **The offeror shall include the following statement on the cover sheet of the exemplar: *This document does not reflect any comments from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) or its designees under the REL program.***
5. The offeror has provided a sound strategy for assessing research alliance members’ satisfaction with analytic technical assistance and analytic technical assistance products.
6. The offeror has proposed a Task 3 leader with experience and expertise in carrying out the work under this task. This individual is assigned at least .50 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per contract year to this task.

Task 4: Applied Research and Evaluation Studies (35 points)

1. The offeror has provided a comprehensive description of the proposed research and evaluation work that it will implement over the five-year contract period. The work is clearly aligned with the 3-5 priority topics described in Task 1 and the proposed content of Task 3 activities.
2. The offeror has provided clear and specific detail on Year 1 activities under this task.
3. The offeror and key personnel have demonstrated sufficient experience and expertise to implement the strategies described in this task. This experience and expertise shall include prior work on the following: (a) extracting and using data from state and/or local longitudinal data systems for research and evaluation purposes; (b) collecting data of other types for use in research and evaluation projects; (c) understanding of statistical and evaluation methods; (d) designing, recruiting participants for, and conducting randomized control trials and other evaluations of program effectiveness in educational settings; and (e) content-area expertise appropriate to the focus of the applied research and evaluation studies proposed, with specific detail provided for work to be conducted in Year 1.
4. The offeror has demonstrated its ability to write cogent, clear, and high quality research or evaluation reports by providing two reports or excerpts of two reports in the appendix of the proposal. These

reports highlight different but essential strengths of the offeror. **The offeror shall include the following statement on the cover sheet of the exemplar: *These documents do not reflect any comments from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) or its designees under the REL program.***

5. The offeror has proposed a Task 4 leader with experience and expertise in carrying out the work under this task. This individual is assigned at least .50 FTE per contract year to this task.

Task 5: Dissemination (15 points)

1. The offeror has provided a thorough description of the range of proposed dissemination strategies over the 5 years of the contract period. The dissemination strategies indicate an expertise in communicating research and evaluation study findings in a way that is accessible, timely, and meaningful to the day-to-day work of education practitioners and policy makers.
2. Proposed Year 1 dissemination activities and timeline are described in specific detail.
3. The offeror has clearly described a strategy for assessing the utility and satisfaction of dissemination events and products.
4. The offeror and key personnel have adequate experience and expertise to implement the strategies described in this task. Such experience and expertise includes prior work on the following: (a) developing and implementing a variety of strategies for conveying research findings to audiences of practitioners and/or policymakers; and (b) using technology to maximize the reach and effectiveness of dissemination efforts.
5. The offeror has demonstrated thoughtful and innovative approaches to moving research to practice, as evidenced by the exemplar agenda and summary for each of two dissemination events (conducted or proposed) provided in support of the proposal. **The offeror shall include the following statement on the cover sheet of the exemplar: *These documents do not reflect any comments from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) or its designees under the REL program.***

Task 6: Collaboration and Coordination (5 points)

1. The offeror has provided a thorough and feasible description of the proposed collaboration and coordination strategies that it will implement over the 5 year contract period in order to ensure the best possible use of resources possible, particularly when needs are identified that are outside the scope of the REL program.
2. The offeror has provided a thorough and feasible description of a strategy that will help RELs build on knowledge learned from other RELs and research organizations.

Task 7: Management and Reporting + Staffing and Management Plan (10 points)

1. The offeror has provided a strong plan and clear set of procedures for performing the tasks specified in the PWS in a timely and cost-effective manner, including how it will effectively manage and coordinate personnel (including subcontractors and consultants) working on the contract.
2. The offeror has clearly described its strategy for assessing the progress and lessons learned from each year and how that assessment, along with the REL goals and objectives, will be used to shape each year's updated annual plan.
3. The offeror has clearly explained how each of the tasks will enhance each other to create a strong portfolio of research on the 3-5 priority topics.
4. The offeror has demonstrated through its description of the proposed composition and expectations for the governing board that it will use the board effectively to help meet the REL's goals and performance objectives.

5. The offeror has provided an effective and feasible system for ensuring that it will submit products of the highest quality that meet IES standards.
6. The offeror and key personnel have adequate experience and expertise to implement the strategies described in this task. Such experience and expertise includes prior work on the following: (a) management of complex operations, including simultaneous activity on multiple large- and small-scale research and/or technical assistance projects, (b) management of potentially multiple subcontractors, (c) organizing and incorporating guidance from oversight or advisory boards, (d) strong quality assurance process for preparation of reports and other products.
7. The offeror proposes substantive and meaningful work to be subcontracted to small businesses. Substantive work as described here includes work other than courier services, office supplies, or travel services. A meaningful capacity is one in which small business are doing actual work under a particular task that is part of the contract and for which they are qualified.

Proposals for Optional Task 8 will be reviewed separately using a 25 point scale. After ED selects the contractors for the ten regional contracts, a panel will review any Optional Task 8 proposals submitted by the ten contractors selected.

Task 8: Coordinating Entity (25 points)

1. The offeror provides a reasonable and effective detailed strategy for organizing work groups among the 10 RELs. The offeror provides sound justification to support the strategy offered.
2. The offeror demonstrates experience that would indicate ability to create a survey instrument for OMB approval.
3. The offeror provides a compelling sample agenda and description of a conference call that is likely to promote active engagement of all participants.
4. The offeror provides a sound and effective design for an intranet system that would be used to promote sharing of REL documents and ideas.
5. The offeror and key personnel have sufficient experience and expertise to implement the coordinating task.

The subcontracting plan for Tasks 1-7 will be reviewed separately from the Technical Proposal using a 20 point scale. The points earned will be added to the total technical score.

This evaluation criterion will also be applied to the Offeror's subcontracting plan for Task 8. The points earned will be added to the total technical score.

Small Business Subcontracting (up to 20 points)

The subcontracting plan will be reviewed separately from the Technical Proposal using a 20 point scale. The points earned will be added to the total technical score.

Small Business Subcontracting (up to 20 points)

1. Demonstrates integration of small businesses into a significant portion of the project as evidenced by the small business plan; small business plans that meet or exceed the minimum of 37.3% of subcontract dollars awarded to small business may earn up to 20 points.

The U.S. Department of Education's metrics for reviewing the small business subcontracting plan are as follows:

0 to 10 points may be earned for subcontracting plans that meet or exceed ED's goals of providing between 37.3% to 44% of dollars to small businesses.

11 to 15 points may be earned for subcontracting plans that exceed ED's goals by providing between 45% to 50% of dollars to small businesses.

16 to 20 points may be earned for subcontracting plans that exceed ED's goals by providing 51% or more of dollars to small businesses.

Please remember ED's goals are based on a percentage of total subcontracting dollars.

2. Small Businesses that submit a proposal as the prime contractor may earn up to 20 points for this factor.

3. CORPORATE COMMITMENT TO SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTING (10 points)

Offeror's Corporate Commitment to Small Business Subcontracting will be reviewed using a 10 point scale. This is a bonus evaluation criterion.

Offerors that are large businesses may submit information on their company's commitment to small business contracting. This information may include financial data showing a percentage of the company's contracts awarded to small businesses, information on the company's performance in partnering with small businesses, and, other information reflecting their commitment.

This information should reflect the company's overall commitment, and should not be restricted to reflect only subcontracting goals developed for Government contracts. The Government will evaluate this information as follows and points earned will be added to the score for small business.

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| Large Business – no submission | 0 |
| Large Business – submission | 0-10 points |
| Small Business – no submission | 10 points |